

Message Text

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USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBFR VIENNA 0127

MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: MARCH 20 PLENARY SESSION

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. AT THE MARCH 20 PLENARY MEETING OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, THE ONLY STATEMENT WAS PRESENTED BY THE SOVIET REP (KHLESTOV).

2. SOVIET REP LED OFF BY BRIEFLY REVIEWING EASTERN FIRST STEP AND FREEZE PROPOSALS AS WELL AS THE RECENT AMENDMENTS TO THE EASTERN NOV 8 DRAFT AGREEMENT, STRESSING AS THEIR COMMON FEATURE THE EQUALITY OF OBLIGATIONS FOR ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. KHLESTOV CONTRASTED THIS EASTERN FLEXIBILITY WITH CONTINUED WESTERN EFFORTS TO OBTAIN UNILATERAL

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ADVANTAGE. HE SAID THERE WERE TWO BASIC OBSTACLES TO

PROGRESS IN THE VIENNA TALKS: THE REFUSAL OF WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO ASSUME PRECISE REDUCTION OBLIGATIONS, AND THE WESTERN DEMAND FOR PROPORTIONATELY LARGER EASTERN REDUCTIONS. KHLESTOV REITERATED THAT ALL COMPONENTS OF ARMED FORCES, NOT JUST GROUND FORCES, HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, AND ASSERTED THAT UNDER EASTERN EQUAL PERCENTAGE APPROACH, DISPARITIES IN ANY GIVEN BRANCH OF THE ARMED FORCES, NOT JUST GROUND FORCES, HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, AND ASSERTED THAT UNDER EASTERN EQUAL PERCENTAGE APPROACH, DISPARITIES IN ANY GIVEN BRANCH OF THE ARMED FORCES WOULD BE REFLECTED IN THE QUANTITY OF REDUCTIONS.

3. IN ARGUING FOR PRECISE WEST EUROPEAN REDUCTION OBLIGATIONS, SOVIET REP INDIRECTLY TOOK ISSUE WITH ALLIED ARGUMENTS ON THE UNEQUAL LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY REDUCTIONS ON COUNTRIES WITHIN THE AREA AND THOSE OUTSIDE IT. IN OUTLINING TWO CATEGORIES OF REDUCTION OBLIGATIONS, KHLESTOV SAID THAT IT WAS ONLY LOGICAL THAT THE STATES WHOSE TERRITORIES LIE WITHIN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS WOULD REDUCE A PART OF THEIR FORCES AND DEMOBILIZE THOSE REDUCED CONTINGENTS, WHILE THE COUNTRIES LOCATED OUTSIDE THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS WOULD WITHDRAW THE TROOPS THEY HAVE REDUCED TO WITHIN THEIR NATIONAL FRONTIERS AND THAT THESE OBLIGATIONS WERE EQUITABLE FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS.

4. SOVIET REP CRITICIZED EXCESSIVE WESTERN ATTENTION GIVEN TO THE "ARTIFICIAL" CONCEPT OF GEOGRAPHIC DISPARITIES DURING THE CURRENT ROUND, AND CHARACTERIZED AS "STRANGE" THE WESTERN EMPHASIS ON THE DISADVANTAGES INHERENT IN ANY REDUCTIONS AGREEMENT, AS WELL AS ALLIED REFERENCES TO POSSIBLE SITUATIONS INVOLVING CONTRAVENTION OF AN AGREEMENT. HE WARNED THAT TO PURSUE LATTER SUBJECT WOULD LEAD INTO DISCUSSION OF MOBILIZATION POTENTIALS. IN CLOSING, KHLESTOV CHARACTERIZED RIGID WESTERN POSITIONS IN VIENNA AS OUT OF STEP WITH CURRENT STATE OF DETENTE IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

5. THE TEXT OF KHLESTOV' STATEMENT WAS SENT BY AIRGRAM.RESOR

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